

Boston Harbor Islands Advisory Council
Meeting Minutes
Partnership Office, 15 State Street, 8th Floor Conference Room, Boston, MA
Wednesday, September 11, 2013, 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM

Maureen Cavanaugh, Vice-Chair, opened the meeting and welcomed all. Council and audience members introduced themselves. Shane O'Donohoe was introduced as a new candidate for council membership representing recreational campers.

Feedback on the 2013 Summer Season

Kelly Fellner, National Park Service (NPS), and Jane Ellis, Boston Harbor Island Alliance (BHIA), asked for feedback on the summer season. They presented some of the raw data collected about visitation to the park. Visits to the Boston harbor Islands Pavilion were up from last year, but ferry ridership was down, probably due to poor weather and that Boston's Best Cruises did not run trips from Quincy this year. Ferry ridership from Hingham increased 50% from last year, possibly due to the increased residence and business at the shipyard.

Advisory Council members discussed the improvement projects on East Head of Peddocks Island and the cottages on middle head. The new yurts were very successful. The status of the chapel was also discussed. Approval was received to use windows from the Naval Air Station Weymouth Chapel, but the chapel on Peddocks must be determined to be structurally sound before restoration can continue. Ethnographer Cathy Stanton, University of Massachusetts–Amherst, is conducting an ethnographic study of Peddocks and this includes interviewing cottage owners. Students from the Olmstead Center for Landscape Preservation's Designing the Parks 2013 Internship Program spent six weeks reimagining Peddocks Island. Their work can be seen at <http://designingtheparks2013.wordpress.com>.

Advisory Council members recommended there be more access for private boaters on both Georges and Peddocks Islands, and thanked the Partnership for improvements for small boater access to Little Brewster Island.

2016 Anniversaries

Kelly Fellner discussed the United States Coast Guard (USCG) plans for repairs and rehabilitation of Boston Light before the 300th anniversary in 2016. Plans include fixing the keeper's house and roof, taking out the oil tanks, repairing to sewage system, giving the tower a facelift, and developing new exhibits. USCG wants input from the Advisory Council members about ways to engage visitors and celebrate the anniversary. Members suggested continuing the discussion at the December meeting.

Kelly reminded all about NPS "Call to Action" initiatives preparing for the 100th anniversary of the National Park Service in 2016. She invited all to participate in a national conversation at <http://nextcenturyforparks.org/> and submit their centennial ideas.

Ask the Superintendent

Kelly Fellner said that Giles Parker, currently Chief of Staff to the Commissioner for the National Parks of New York Harbor, has been selected as the new superintendent. He has experience working with a variety of partners and also with the hurricane response after super storm Sandy. He will be at the Partnership meeting on September 24. Kelly said Giles will officially start on October 7.

Kelly responded to several questions:

- Dave Waller, the new owner of Graves Light was invited to Partnership meetings.
- Occupants of the NPS building at 15 State Street include Northeast Regional Office staff and park staff.
- Mass Maritime is in the 2nd year of a 3-year contract to manage the marina on Spectacle. The fee for the marina is set in consultation with partners.
- Online reservations for moorings started in August.
- Partners are looking at ways to make sure that infrastructure meets the needs of visitors and boaters, including sustaining piers, mooring fields, dinghies, and ferry service.
- Partners are working to create a memorial for Boston Marathon bombing victim, Krystal Campbell at the saddle gazebo on Spectacle Island. A closed service will be held for family, friends, and staff that worked with her later in the month.
- Remediation efforts on Gallops Island continue.

New Business

Advisory Council members thanked Kelly for her service as Acting Superintendent.

USCG is discussing how to remember and recognize Skip Empey for his service in the lighthouse preservation community and specifically as a volunteer at Boston Light.

Elizabeth Solomon invited all to the Native American memorial service on Deer Island on October 21.

Other Updates

Maureen Cavanaugh reminded all that there are currently 6 vacancies on the Council and that 8 members' terms will expire in 2014.

Public Comment

There was no further public comment.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 pm.

